HYGEIA VOL I

BEDDOES

ESSAYS

ON

THE MEANS

OF

AVOIDING

HABITUAL SICKLINESS,

AND

PREMATURE MORTALITY.

ESSAY FIRST.

1802

12913(P)
Hygeia Vol. I. 1802.
T. Beddoes.
86149

ESSAYS

ON

THE MEANS

OF

AVOIDING

HABITUAL SICKLINESS,

AND

PREMATURE MORTALITY.

ESSAY FIRST.

ΑΡΙΦΡΟΝΟΣ ΣΙΚΥΩΝΙΟΥ ΣΚΟΛΙΟΝ.

Υγιεια, πρεσβιστα μακαρων,
μετα σευ ναιοιμι
το λειπομενον βιοτας.
συ δε μοι προφρων συνοικος ειης.
ει γαρ τις η πλουτω χαρις, η τεκεων,
τας ισοδαιμονος τ' ανθρωποις
βασιληιδος αρχας, η ποθων,
ως κρυφιοις Αφροδιτης αρκυσι θηρευομεν·
η ει τις αλλα θεοθεν ανθρωποισι τερψις,
η πονων αμπνοα πεφανται,
μετα σειο, μακαιρ' Υγιεια,
τεθηλε παντα, και λαμπει Χαριτων εαρ·
σεθεν δε χωρις ουτις ευδαιμων.

WELLCOME LIBRARY INSTITUTE

INVOCATION

BY

ARIPHRON

OF

SICYON.

O Thou! among the blissful host
Deserving mortal incense most!
What yet of days remain to me
HYGEIA! let me pass with thee,
And THOU my willing inmate be!
If ought of solace coffered hoards—
Whatever progeny affords—
Or sovereign sway
Exalting mortals to the Gods above—
Or that sweet prey
Which struggles secret in the snares of love—
To toil-worn man, by Heaven's behest,
If balms unnamed refreshment bring—
All owe, benignant Power! to THEE their zest;
THOU giv'st its radiance to the GRACES' spring;
Nor but with thee may child of earth be blest.

I desire to be instrumental in diffusing a taste for the most useful species of knowledge, and in converting nations into HUMANE SOCIETIES. There is an art not suspected by the multitude to lurk among possibilities, and never yet cultivated by any people, although its honorable title was usurped by a system of intercourse, once established among the French. This is the ART OF LIVING; for whose reception men's minds can only be prepared by being familiarised with just ideas concerning animal nature; and whose precepts can issue only from the shrine of Hygeia.

Preface to Consid. on factitious airs. Parts IV. & V.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE instruction of an audience, sufficiently docile from conscious ignorance, brings with it very little care except that of the provision and arrangement of materials. But a body of information on health, where the secret purpose is not merely to fill a certain number of pages, constitutes a task of far greater anxiety and circumspection. Whoever undertakes such a task, may to a certainty calculate upon preoccupation. The just importance of every man in his own estimation, infallibly produces the desire of knowing what to think concerning the causes by which he is affected. But the judgment of the great majority — not excepting even those who

have undergone the longest and most expensive education—being utterly unprepared for exerting itself with effect upon this subject, such notions are picked up as chance may offer: and what is thus lightly believed, is warmly recommended and blindly followed. This is a source of evil so copious, that whoever, by shewing the insufficiency of the grounds of common assent, could here introduce a prudent forbearance in thought and deed, would probably, in a single year, render his species a greater service than any one has been happy enough to render it in a whole life. So great a change, however, must be the fruit of a long course of years, and of much co-operation. No time, therefore, should be lost in preparing the way for the reception of just ideas; and considerations to this tendency will, I conceive, form no improper introduction to a work like the present.

But the pre-occupation of which I speak, will exist in different degrees. The inquisitive indeed out of the profession carry on

their pursuits, pretty much as if there lay an interdict upon the ingenious against employing their talents, and the opulent their wealth, to promote the knowledge of themselves. Yet one man will have his reason better exercised, and his memory better stored, than another. Hence a writer in my situation finds himself obliged to fix upon an imaginary standard of capacity. This should doubtless be taken rather too low than too high; there being no comparison between the inconvenience to the intelligent from a few superfluous pages, and the evil arising to others, from deficiency of elucidation. If therefore, I shall be sometimes found adverting to errors, at the grossness of which common sense, assisted by a scanty portion of accurate information, revolts, I hope to stand excused; and no less if I descend to particular directions, which tolerable quickness of apprehension must discover in the very enunciation of the principle, which they are designed to carry into effect. It is enough that for want of the directions, serious mis-

chiefs are in fact committed; and that the errors involve multitudes in misery and destruction.

If the reader, under any interesting emergency, have made the experiment of in vain searching the books, upon which he relied for instruction, let him recollect the acuteness of his disappointment; and then decide how far it is excuseable to be minute upon some points; and how far inexcuseable not to be minute upon others.

There is besides danger of misapprehension. When the judgment is neither previously informed, nor quickened by the urgency of distress, it easily ranks among minutiae, matters of decisive importance. In every part of life, there are *seeming* trifles, which if neglected, take the most severe revenge; and no seeming trifles are so vindictive as those relating to health.

In my choice of topics, I shall principally hold the middle and more opulent classes in view. There only do we find leisure for study; there only the necessary degree of

intelligence; and the means of carrying good counsel fully into effect. I believe too that whatever benefit these essays may be capable of conferring on my indigent countrymen, will be best conveyed through the medium of their superiors. In some cases, the most circumstantial details would scarce afford security against misapprehension; and many prejudices must be expected to resist the dead letter, which example, sympathy and exhortation by the living voice, will with little difficulty overcome.

My plan by no means comprehends the whole of PREVENTIVE MEDICINE. For such a plan I am not enough acquainted with society in its present complicated state. I have not learned from experience the unfavourable effect of all the variety of human callings upon the human frame; nor can I point out therefore with sufficient certainty the means of counteracting each unfavourable effect. An undertaking, so great and useful, could only be accomplished by an union or concert of powers, not likely I fear soon to take place.

Writers, the better part of whose brain lies in the books out of which they copy, have in very few departments been more busy than in this. There is no department, however, where the compiler has been so constantly baffled. For unless the objects be examined and re-examined by the eyes of him who describes them, the most bulky volume will prove nothing better than a chaffy bundle, cruelly mocking the hope of those that expect it to yield a supply of wholesome doctrine.

Notwithstanding the limitation of my plan, I proceed in its execution with the most unfeigned diffidence. I have lately been employed upon a *general treatise of physiology*, for the use of all to whom their own nature is interesting. The treatise and its illustrative engravings, are in forwardness. But I do not, I confess, look with more anxiety towards the time when that work of comprehensive enquiry and arrangement is to appear before its judges, than I experience in sending abroad this smaller one of selection and

exposition. Whatever may be the reason, I believe it is an unquestionable fact, that medical writings for the profession, have at all times been infinitely superior in their kind to those for the public. No wonder therefore that I should feel too proud to be gratified by a comparison, however to my advantage, with certain predecessors. But there does exist a model to which I am truly humble at the idea of being referred. It is *that*, which daily contemplation of domestic sufferings must have created in the breast of every experienced and discerning physician, whose feelings are not bound up in the profits of his craft.

ESSAY

ON

PERSONAL PRUDENCE,

AND ON

PREJUDICES

RESPECTING

HEALTH.

TO

HEADS OF FAMILIES,

Inhabitants of the

BRITISH ISLES.

IT is to you in particular, my countrymen and countrywomen, whose most severe afflictions it has long been my endeavour to trace to their source, that I address myself at the outset of my undertaking. In its progress I shall consider myself as addressing you more frequently than any other class. As parents and protectors of beings whose happiness is at stake, inasmuch as their constitution is unconfirmed, the majority among you have more than a single interest in the art which I attempt to teach. It is not

upon yourselves alone that your want of proficiency in this art is visited. By unwitting violation of its precepts, you deal out misery where the thought of dispensing happiness (in such a case I will not hazard offence by speaking of *duty*) constitutes your prime delight. That your interesting cares are multiplied as your family receives accessions, you do not require to be told. But I know not if you are fully aware of the necessity of extending your views to a variety of situations and to a long course of events. For what will avail protection from early injury, should you fail to make a worthy choice, when you commit the objects of your solicitude (as I fear you frequently must) to the hands of substitutes?

Nor let us imagine the requisite parental foresight to end even here. All that has been so far done, though done ever so well, may tend but to the increase of moral and physical evil. If you have any difficulty in assenting to this proposition, keep your eye for a time upon a certain number among those young persons, who have remained safe while under superintendance, and whose condition appears the most prosperous at the moment they are ventured into open life. How many of them will you perceive dashed

to pieces early in their course, or disabled by obstacles of unknown nature and position! And will you not put such examples to heart? and rank it among your principal concerns to equip your children, as they advance to that age when they must be left to their own guidance, with the most precise instructions respecting the hazards they will soon have to encounter?

In the accounts which have descended to us of the Grecian solemnities, you may have remarked that the most awful were introduced by observances, designed to awaken attention, and to purify the soul. As I must be desirous of communicating my own sense of the importance of my subject, I should be happy if by any means I could accomplish the double purpose of those preparatory rites of antiquity.

It is certain that in recommending to men the care of themselves, no voice has hitherto had half the influence attributed to that of the Hierophant upon the Eleusinian votaries. What possessor of a curious piece of machinery feels satisfied till sufficiently master of its construction to judge of its state; and who but carefully attends to the preservation of its substance and form?—Yet the usages of life, as they have come

down to us, proceed upon the supposition that the human machine is made of materials so impassive, and so firmly put together, as to render superfluous that insight, without which vigilance is blind. No admonition, no example, no species of affection, no personal sufferings, have been effectual in rendering a contrary conviction general. Motives, which, upon a cool contemplation of the facts belonging to the natural history of man, one is tempted to pronounce singly irresistible, have failed when united. Otherwise innumerable hands would have been long since at work, and the world weeded of half its evils. But the heart and head have been heretofore filled with other concerns; and nothing beyond a casual thought, a fugitive feeling, a barren ejaculation, has been allotted to that which is doubtless the most important object in mortal life—HABITUAL WELL-BEING. Inattention is the ordinary state of mind. But there are few whose security some near alarm does not occasionally shake. Then opinion occupies the intervals of inattention; and, of the two, opinion is, I believe, much the more mischievous. For it is commonly both erroneous and strong—*erroneous* as being suddenly formed upon a difficult subject by the random application of maxims, in them-

selves very precarious; but *strong*, in virtue of the concomitant affections and of the defect of information on this particular subject, however different the case may be with regard to others.

Unhappily, the most effectual means of introducing a salutary mode of thinking, appear to be wanting in proportion as they are to be wished for. One principal topic of persuasion must be abandoned. The general excellence of the thing to be recommended is already felt with more force than it can be represented. It is a case in which, as the shortest sentence has a happier effect than the most eloquent oration, panegyric must be mute. For to the slightest hint of the advantages of health, all hearts rebound immediate assent, as well-disciplined troops start, with one accord, into movement at the voice of their commander. This, I suppose indeed, may be one of those truths of which the very obviousness is among the causes of their being neglected. By transferring to the means what belongs to the end, it comes to be imagined that the object itself is as easily secured as its value is conceived.

It is one thing, however, to acknowledge a principle upon a formal appeal; and

another to be impressed with a sense of its importance, such as shall bring it before the imagination in its relation and bearings, with vivacity enough to determine our proceedings on the spot and without the delay of deliberation. This is genuine practical knowledge. It is this alone which has power to preserve and rescue. It may either be strikingly exemplified on a large scale amid those heroic scenes which History loves to paint; or, by an operation too gradual to be perceived by slight observers, it may procure affluence to its possessor, or the more enviable prosperity of a sound mind in a robust person. In all cases, its essential nature is the same. The manner of its acquisition, and the benefits it confers, remain unchanged. It consists in the clear discernment of good and evil, of cause and consequence; being an infallible guide, where faithfully followed; but leaving men exposed to the worst accidents of a road, infested by dangers, where it fails altogether, or sheds an unheeded light.

To bear in the mouth that *health is the first of blessings*, not only answers no purpose, but tends to create that sort of hypocrisy or self-deceit, which substitutes the repetition of a maxim for its observance. Habits

such as will stand firm under difficulties and temptations, can be created only by taking up the means of securing this blessing as a study;—that is, by fixing the attention severally upon the modes in which it is forfeited, on the advantages that accompany its possession, and the consequences of its loss. If ever the Roman address of congratulation

Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum,

be appropriate, it may with the greatest right be claimed by him who learns caution with regard to himself, from observing what brings infirmity upon others. In all conditions there occur too frequent calamities, fit to serve as lessons; and they should be carefully noticed by him who would acquire, and distinctly pointed out by him who would instil, an efficient sense of self-preservation. Towards our neighbour there is no humanity in making the good or ill that befals him the subject merely of loose, fleeting, unapplied prattle. But where the views are not yet formed, we may do infinite kindness by using it in illustration of those laws which mortals can seldom infringe with impunity. For in the order of nature, much more invariably than in matters of human

regulation, does it obtain as a rule, that *ignorance of the law is no excuse for the transgressor.*

At the age proper for admission into the school of life, the feelings should first be addressed. The understanding will then take its turn; that kind of curiosity ever leading to most improvement, which is awakened by touches upon the heart. As long as there exists a newspaper to put the occurrences of common life into circulation, or indeed till Rumour herself perish, we can never be at a loss for copious matter of instruction. On minds, not preoccupied by vicious associations, the accidents to which humanity is liable, may always be so exhibited as to produce due impression. Such minds will not refuse themselves to a representation of the pain, the languor, the dependance, the incapacity for receiving or affording pleasure, which various kinds of indisposition produce. The history of few fathers and mothers is so uniformly prosperous as to be incapable of supplying materials for the present purpose. Where the education of one generation has been, in the usual sense of the phrase, *neglected*, tenfold exertions are frequently made in behalf of the succeeding; and it is well if more evil do not ensue to the one

from superabundance, than the other has sustained from want, of tuition. But this anxiety seldom extends *systematically* beyond literary information. In more essential concerns, if another Fontenelle were to arise, he would still find that the experience of parents is without profit to children.* Yet if parents would take a little pains to analyse themselves, and to communicate the result at a proper season and in a proper manner, they need not fear forfeiting the smallest share of respect; and examples so near, would produce sensations, which no time could obliterate. Lasting trains may likewise be formed out of the history of persons, snatched in their prime from every object of customary desire, because, in a luckless hour, they slighted or overlooked some noxious power, which had planted itself in their way? Nor will those revolutions of the human frame, more tremendous than its demolition, in consequence of which, the activity of *many* is absorbed, for a series of years, in endeavours to soothe the bodily sufferings, or retrieve the mental alienation of *one*, be lost upon the youthful observer of his species and himself. For they

---

* Les sottises des peres et des meres sont perdues pour les enfans.

do not, any more than the phaenomena, which we behold with less emotion, spring from malignant supernatural agency, against which there is no defence; but may in most instances, be satisfactorily traced to the want of appropriate intellectual culture, and its genuine offspring, blind temerity.

In what I shall propose, I am not, to such a degree, apprehensive of objections on the score of impropriety, as of remonstrances on that of difficulty. The elements of every sort of doctrine have doubtless their difficulty, even where the means of information may be procured, like so many articles of commerce, upon order. And much more will the beginning of that study be difficult, where new means are to be provided, and a new scheme to be drawn up for their application. To *talk*, it is true, of bringing up pupils with a sacred regard to health, is nothing less than new. Not a school-bill but has the assurance to come forward with professions in this strain. Of professions, indeed, as an article without which his occupation will not thrive, no sort of quack is stupid enough to be sparing. But to bestow the talent of distinguishing the safest footing at every advance in life, and to inspire that true economy of existence, which takes ever so

long a circuit rather than wantonly encounter a suspicious obstacle, and, whenever safety ought to become the secondary consideration, lays out beforehand for the best chance of escaping unimpaired, is an affair so different from pouring out vague promises, and is at the same time so unusual, that great cities and populous provinces, nay whole kingdoms may be searched, without the discovery of a single serious attempt to carry such a plan into practice. On the contrary, it may be hard to find examples where that which alone can spread sunshine over the years of a human being, is not of all acquisitions the least sought.—I speak not of houses, where every other wish is absorbed in that of decorating the young people, particularly the girls, with accomplishments, which may for a time attract the idle passenger, but soon come to be as little alluring as may-garlands that hang withering round their pole.—It is alas! common to meet with families, in which right feelings, respecting the culture of the youthful members, are accompanied by notions right indeed, but only to a certain degree right. Then education, considered as an apprenticeship to the art of securing the blessings, and escaping the miseries, by which we are beset, usually

miscarries. And the miscarriage, traced to its inevitable consequence, produces somewhat of that painful eagerness of compassion, which is inspired by desperate efforts to snatch a beloved object from destruction, when they fail solely because the eye is prevented by some casual impediment from directing the hand. At the prospect of disappointments, so severe and so little merited, it is difficult to refrain from addressing remonstrances to those by whom they are about to be incurred, however small be the encouragement which experience holds out either to the moral or medical monitor.

"You are too discerning," it may without flattery be said, "to confound shew with "solidity, ephemeral with lasting attain-"ments. You are also too faithful to your "charge, to incur the guilt of neglecting "that which you approve. But your views, "though they are far from resting, like those "of so many others, upon the colours of the "surface, do not sufficiently penetrate into "the substance."

"If you would effectually teach that "parsimony of health, which in the illus-"trious De Witt was so closely united "with prodigality of life, you must no lon-

" ger suffer the impediments, accumulated
" by the preposterous industry of ages, to
" keep you aloof from human nature. Ap-
" proach yet many steps nearer; and con-
" vince yourselves that as the genuine hap-
" piness of man has its source within, it is
" his internal condition which demands your
" earliest and most unremitting care.—Do
" not imagine your error the less fatal be-
" cause it regards only a single point. If
" you neglect this point, it must be under
" peril of casting over your declining years
" a shade of sorrow, deep in proportion as
" your affections are kind. By those affec-
" tions, then, I conjure you to take the ful-
" lest security which existing means can
" give; and, above all things, in tracing
" your plan, to beware how you employ a
" scale, which can only be of service in fil-
" ling up particular parts."

" Let it live in your recollection, that
" *affluence to render all the arts its tributary,*
" *and talents adapted not less to constant use*
" *than occasional exhibition, combined with*
" *the fullest self-approbation, can at best but*
" *soothe the fatigues of him who is doomed to*
" *bear through life the burden of a sickly*
" *frame; and that the valetudinarian, though*
" *he must indeed be less unhappy for being*

"*possessed of such advantages, can by no* "*means be accounted happy.* If you lose "sight of this one indispensable axiom, the "result is certain. You will give to the "superstructure the attention due to your "base. In which case, how vain your la- "bour! how much too like rearing an "edifice without tie or foundation, in the "face of a tempestuous sky!"

The reader, if he have large experience of the ways and means of life, will not require to be informed that an end clearly in view, however remote, is the best security against going astray; and that, without such an end, no one can say, whether he is, at any moment, nearer the attainment of his desires or further off. Hence I am in hopes that he will not disdain a familiar illustration, if it promise to be of service in keeping him upon the right track. What I could wish then, and what every one who has taken serious pains to follow up the most irreparable and most regretted of human sufferings to their origin, will agree with me in wishing, is:— that seasonable care should be taken to provide each individual with a set of ideas, exhibiting the precise relation in which his system, and the several organs of which it is compounded, stand to external

agents, particularly to those with which he is likely to come most in contact; — that these sets of ideas be so placed in his head, that he may refer to them with as little difficulty as to the watch he wears in his pocket;—and that as by the one he adjusts his business to his time, so by the other he may be always able to accommodate his actions to his powers.

The distance at which we at present stand from such a consummation is no reason why future generations should, like the past, be abandoned to their fate. The relation of the animated machine to the powers by which it is put in motion, is unhappily not enough understood for the purposes of minute medical philosophy; but so far as it is understood, it constitutes, as I hope to shew in the sequel, a doctrine rich in lessons for common life.

There need be no difficulty, I am sure, for want of practice. Even where information is at the lowest ebb, and where the understanding is exercised with the least confidence, the process I recommend is quite familiar. Of this, on subjects of inferior importance, we have examples in the instructions, which young people are perpetually receiving on the improvement of fortune,

the choice of connections, the maintenance of character, the arts of captivating vanity, and cajoling weakness. Nor is the labour lost. It is in this way men acquire what is vulgarly called *prudence*, but what is in fact the less essential part of that comprehensive virtue. There are few members of society who by such preparation have not obtained some facility in judging how they stand with the world: and the acquisition is in constant request. Few suffer a long interval to pass without bringing their affairs under distinct review; and the slightest tokens of a public or private change, are sufficient to induce them to enter, many times a day, into council with themselves how they may best meet probable contingencies. And in what way is this habit conferred? In teaching prudential combination, do we trust to premature generalisations? to mere maxims, and unimpressive precepts? Do we give only dim views, and transient glances, as if for the very purpose of perplexing?—Are not rather all possible particulars passed and repassed before the mind, till they have learned to rise at a word in their native shape and colours? Do we not devote whole years to arithmetic, to the rules observed in making bargains, the laws

of commerce, the marks denoting the qualities of dead stock, and of live stock? Is not every case of ruinous misconduct pointed out as a warning? every opposite case as an example?—What is this but the *anatomy* and *physiology* of external prosperity? And as the pupil is more thoroughly initiated into the one, does he not proceed with more certain steps towards the other?

The very same reason that makes it advantageous to be able, at the shortest warning, to call before us a summary of our *pecuniary* circumstances, applies with at least equal force to our *personal* circumstances. To many it is necessary that the latter should be in a prosperous state, in order that they should subsist in *any* way; and is not the same thing necessary to us all, in order that we may subsist in a *desireable* way?

In forming the inclinations, so much pains are taken (and very justly as far as independence is concerned) to instil a lively regard to loss and gain, that one class of facts might have been expected to obtain more notice. For instances are by no means rare, where total prevention of success in life depends upon certain consequences left behind by disease, even where they do not involve the smallest degree of physical

inability. This misfortune is too often accompanied or speedily followed by the destruction of internal peace; so that, by one and the same cruel operation, the frail edifice of our being loses support from within, just when it is most needed from the failure of that from without.

To have a distinct perception of the origin of these evils, it is only necessary to recollect how we are affected by the aspect of those who approach us. What impression, for example, does a sallow, unwholesome complexion, seams from the small-pox, scrophulous scars, the blight of beauty, and those marks which debauchery is apt to stamp upon the face, make upon the spectator? Is he not in general disposed to turn away in disgust from these appearances? or if politeness forbid him to give way to his feelings, do they not rise to a greater height for being dammed up?—And in what manner does the mind of those who perceive themselves to be objects of aversion react?—Instead of going for an answer to the theory, which explains how our habits are formed, I shall bring one of the most sagacious of self-observers to speak for himself. The late professor, J. George Busch, whose memory the city of Hamburgh is at this moment em-

ployed in honouring, tells of his having had the small-pox at nine years old, and though they were attended with no imminent danger, they left him badly marked. "I was "afterwards informed that previously to this "disorder I had a comely appearance. For "myself, I had never attended to the point. "But one thing I know well. After this "time, I perceived that those who visited "my parents, universally withheld from me "that kindness of attention, which with a "child is the first motive to render himself "agreeable, though they shewed it to my "well-looking brothers and sisters. All the "pranks that I, poor pock-pitted boy, to "whose feet no dancing-master had given "the right position, or drawn the head "from between the shoulders, played in my "vivacity, might indeed have been per-"formed with an ill grace.

"This too, I should observe, was the "period when the chief art of education "consisted in hard words and blows. On "me reproaches rained from all quarters. "When my parents, who alone treated me "with any degree of sense, carried me to "Haarburg, my grandmother and a brisk "grand-aunt so maltreated poor George, that "my father and mother were extremely

" unwilling I should repeat the visit. In my " grandfather's favour I stood all the higher. " for he was stock-blind; so could not judge " of me by my exterior." From his subsequent history—particularly from the hypochondriacal complaint, into which he afterwards fell—it should seem that this man, active, wise and useful as he proved, never entirely recovered of the wound inflicted on his tender mind. What then can be hoped where fewer resources exist, and fewer favourable circumstances concur in riper years?

Unkindness is the natural provocative of malignity; nor will it often be in the power of Fortune to counteract, by any favours, the early union of painful feeling with a large mass of ideas. So important is it that nothing should intercept those sympathies of voice and countenance which are to children a source of such exquisite enjoyment, and a portion, by no means contemptible, of the discipline of humanity!

Unhappy feelings are said to spring from the consciousness of deformity. If the remark be just, these feelings should, in my apprehension, be ascribed to slight or insult rather than, as they commonly are, to envy. Wherever young persons, that have

unwarily been suffered to deviate into crookedness of growth, are kindly treated, they do not, I am sure, yield in temper any more than in talents, to those of more erect figure. Malignity is not, I hope, supposed to have any particular affinity with dwarfishness. Yet superiority of stature must be felt as an enviable distinction. But the contrary defect, being precisely that which at an early age is least offensive to sight, offers the inconsiderate small temptation to adopt a manner, injurious to the disposition of children.

Doubtless when the study of our common nature shall have assumed its station among the pursuits, which no person of education can have neglected without discredit, corporeal blemishes and defects will seldom be suffered to take place; and where they do meet the eye, the spectator will have been tutored to too high a sense of humanity to degrade his countenance into a mirror, in which they are reproachfully reflected. Disgust is commonly the self-created torment of those who have no evil to plague them, *except* want of employment for their time. Few things, in fact, after having attracted rational curiosity, excite disgust. And curiosity, directed in the manner best entitling

it to the name of *rational*, will gradually extirpate this factitious evil, and prevent every rising of unkindness towards innocence, oppressed by misfortune. Nor will it be slow in producing another effect, equally happy and closely allied to these. We shall derive from it sagacity to discern, and firmness to resist, pretensions founded on mere shape and air—pretensions which, when admitted, induce disregard of all worthier titles to esteem. Virgil has exhorted the Romans to spare the submissive, and to beat down the proud. But to encourage those who ought to be repressed, and to repress those who ought to be encouraged, still remains among the most common errors of mankind. That it in great measure originates in superficial acquaintance with the laws of their own existence, is an idea which may escape instantaneous condemnation, if these two truths be recollected;—that the more deeply the understanding penetrates into the productions of art and nature, the less does the fancy dwell upon the qualities that strike at first;—and that more accurate information often reverses the original effect of superficial qualities. I know not whether I may so far presume on my credit with the reader as to add that however the error arises, it requires cor-

rection scarcely less, as may be made to appear in a future number, for the sake of health than of morality.

When a person, tender of the feelings of others, once resolves upon an explanation, face to face, with a friend, he usually sets down the conversation at some distance, in hopes of finding a smooth approach to the disagreeable spot. I have just been practising a stratagem of this kind. For I am exceedingly apprehensive that what in strict order should have been introduced two or three pages earlier, will sound more forbidding than any thing besides in the whole course of these papers. To inspire my readers with resolution enough to venture on a path, which they may be apt to regard with dread, I have exposed beforehand to view, a small specimen of the advantages at which, after moderate exertion, they will be sure to arrive. But let them by no means be content with what I hold out. I invite them to fix their imagination, as strongly as possible, on the desirableness of existing in a state of constant preparation for the exigencies of thought and action. Of this state I neither dare attempt to enumerate the advantages nor the disadvantages of its opposite. For I should appear an insufferable dealer in common place.

Though scarce any one does, in reality, advert to this important matter, except in the gross, and by starts. Nor do I see how it can be properly comprehended or explained, unless that science, which *our* customs confine, to a particular profession, should be drawn forth from the corner into which it has been so undeservedly banished, and established with due honours in the midst of society. For by saying, "take care how you allow "yourself such an indulgence, as it will do "you mischief," I ought not to suppose I shall make much more impression than if I had uttered so many words in an unknown tongue. And in fact, the import of the words must be unknown till it is found in the dictionary of nature.

It will be perceived that the science to which I allude, is the science of the human structure and functions. A certain proficiency in this science, will give a firmer hold of that body of information, or those sets of ideas, in the right application of which *personal prudence* consists; and without it we shall risque falling short of the perfection desirable in an endowment, which at any moment may be summoned into use.

One general rule applies to *physical* instruction. It should, in the first instance, be

always addressed to the senses. By the help of books it can go on, but at its commencement, the very productions of nature herself ought to be presented. I know, indeed, with what abhorrence the processes and preparations which disclose the interior structure of animals, are considered by the unreflecting. And I have lately read of a country—not Great Britian—where two centuries are required to mature any highly useful proposal,—one century for discussing, and one for carrying it into effect. In Great Britian itself, though we see a new amusement adopted the instant it is announced, the more widely a plan promises to diffuse its utility, the longer interval must, in some cases, be allowed between its proposal and general approbation; and again between its approbation and execution,—especially where the profits are not to be reaped immediately *en especes sonnantes*—in money that you may ring on the table, or chink in your purse.

With these checks in full view, I shall venture to advance that nothing would be more easy than to establish in every one of our considerable towns, lectures for a *mixed* audience, on select subjects of ANATOMY. And there is, I should imagine, no considerable town where moderate encouragement

would not induce some active member of the medical profession to engage in their delivery. To travelling professors of science it might by degrees answer, if to their philosophic apparatus they should add an assortment of preparations, models and drawings on a large scale, suited to popular anatomical lectures. That teacher of chemistry, who when treating of respiration, has been accustomed to exhibit any of the contents of the chest, if he did not excite a deep interest in his audience, must have been exceedingly unfortunate.

In asserting that much of anatomy will bear to be rendered popular, I hazard nothing on speculation. I have been happy enough to get the trial repeatedly made. It answered compleatly, and is likely to be persevered in. Having given an account of this interesting experiment in *a lecture introductory to a course*, delivered in Bristol, (*Johnson. 2d edition*), I shall now only state what a cloud of witnesses would be ready to confirm—that the elegance of many preparations afforded a pleasure not to be surpassed by any exhibition whatever, insomuch that taste itself found full gratification—that parents were struck with the obvious application of what they saw to the prevention of disasters, com-

mon in families—and that nothing took place which could give the most timorous female delicacy alarm. I might produce precedents enough from some foreign countries, where courses of *anthropology*, for so they are entitled, are common enough. But I foresee how easy it will be to object,—*Yes, such a thing will do very well abroad, but it does not suit the feelings of English people.*

This statement will, I trust, procure my scheme a few advocates among the ladies. But I have said enough to shew that I am not such a stranger to the prevailing modes of thinking, and to the difficulty of changing them, as to expect much immediate success. Innumerable mothers, though accustomed to consider themselves but as instruments for promoting the well-being of their offspring, and to act and suffer accordingly, will feel an unconquerable repugnance against paying any sort of attention to our internal confirmation, even though the means of instruction be placed ever so conveniently within their reach. That we are *fearfully and wonderfully made* they will piously believe, but every particular proof of this proposition they will consider as lying beyond their province. Most sincrely respecting their general tone of feeling, I renounce every

hope of working to any purpose upon these matrons. And I shall but request that they will take into deliberate consideration a case, which I shall lay before them, as it arises out of the notes of a traveller, who has lately visited a community, separated by extensive deserts from the rest of Africa, and not included in the discoveries of Houghton or Park, though Hornemann may be expected to bring some farther accounts, relating to it.

The exemption of this people from wars, from intestine distractions and epidemic complaints, together with the abundance of every thing required by our grosser appetites, presents, in the original narrative, a most delightful picture. And this picture is heightened by one circumstance, upon which our traveller particularly insists—the universal force of parental affection.—It is not, he thinks, exceeded in any of our polished states. Yet a spot thus seemingly destined to be the seat of happiness does a single circumstance actually convert into a scene of general misery.

This circumstance is a degree of imbecility in parents, which seems to bear a near analogy to that species of insanity, where the patient is perfectly reasonable on all subjects but one. The cause of unhappiness begins to operate,

and is extremely fatal, in early infancy; or, if not fatal, is then productive of injury, that seldom terminates but with life. Though a few, who, in their early years, have to thank their stars for an escape from what is considered as *proper* care, present the most pleasing association of self-enjoyment with the capability of enjoying external things.

"The peculiar cause of misery here," premises my author, "cannot be heard without a "smile, though I hope no one is capable of "relating its effect with a gay countenance." In short, an absurdity, inconceivable by *us* who manage so much better, pervades all the arrangements of common life. The meats though of excellent quality, are made offensive as well as pernicious, by bad cookery. The purest water is rendered brackish before it can be drank. Every infant has his limbs cramped by the national dress. And so uneasy are the very beds, that the sleepers are kept for ever tossing in distressful dreams. I pass over the strong remonstrances which our humane traveller hazarded.—"This very people," says he, "who take "so much pains about the instruction, mo-"rals and establishment of their children, "could not be persuaded to stretch out a "hand in their behalf against abuses so de-

" structive; though that would have been " sufficient for their abolition. They would " hear of no new practices. Their system " was founded, they said, upon immemorial " custom. The cooks, upholsterers, taylors " and other artisans of the country, had not, " as they were taught to believe, their equals " in the universe. In short, insight into " the things, to which I ventured to assert " that all ought to attend, was the province " of none, but certain persons, of whom " each had his peculiar department."

Thus far my narrative. An image of supineness so barbarous, will, I am sensible, shock my readers—my fair readers in particular. But it is by no means my desire to shock any one. I make the quotation solely, as I have said, to put a case.—Should there exist a nation equally infatuated in regard to the *internal* causes of pain and pleasure, by which of the two systems are the respective parents most likely to defeat their fondest wishes? Which set of children would a superior Being, who regards with an equal eye different human tribes, and their discordant manners, be disposed most to compassionate? Would it in his estimation avail the Africans to say that attention to such things as food, apparel and beds, was

a deviation from traditionary practice, and in itself insuperably disgusting?

On the opposite side, could it be admitted as an apology that nothing imaginable was left undone, but that it was looked upon as a care, foreign to heads of families, to qualify themselves for judging of the interior condition of the young members? that such a qualification could not be obtained without trouble and disgust? that the prevention of that morbid sensibility, which brings with it continual suffering, and of that debility which renders the first disorder ruinous or fatal, to the constitution, belongs to *particular persons whose department it exclusively is,* and of whom people of other callings *are taught to believe, that they have not their equals in the universe.*

It can easily be conceived how the Being would argue with that delicacy, which shrinks from the contemplation of the most admirable works of creation, and combining with inconsideration, exposes those, who indulge it, to the misfortune of losing the most cherished objects of their affection, or even of seeing them pine under irremediable wretchedness. As to the pretended perfection of that art, to which the apology alludes, it would, in the supposed circumstances be

a fine subject for raillery or indignation.—For what, it might be asked, is the result afforded by the clearest and most authentic documents, relative to this art? Do they, or do they not, bear, that above one-third of the infants brought into the world, perish before attaining their third year? that few reach the term deemed *natural*? and that of these few, a large proportion languish (perhaps half their lives) in sickness? and this, though in innumerable instances, the most *eminent* practitioners of the said art—men supposed to carry into every house they enter an atmosphere of security, as the anchorites of old did of sanctity—exert their utmost skill, with every possible advantage to second them?—Assuming a milder tone, our Being might illustrate the culture of the person by that of the temper. For who, with a view to ensure to any human creature an uninterrupted succession of placid feelings, would depend altogether on *external* causes? Does not uniform experience attest, that it is the *internal* difference almost alone, and not the difference of circumstances, which makes this man contented, and another the contrary? So it is in a great degree as to health. Unhappiness, it is true, remains unhappiness, whether it arise from within or from without. But

in the latter case, it adheres loosely, and may be thrown off with the cloaths, left behind at the last inn, dissipated by the smile of a mistress or rolled into the lake of oblivion by a turn of the wheel of fortune. Is there any thing we can rely upon for giving satisfaction to the unhealthy and the morose? Do not both frequently find a sting in that which gives all others the greatest pleasure? And will not both, at times, be as ill at ease on a bed of roses, as Guatimozim on his red-hot gridiron? So that she who has secured to her progeny all the *external* means of well-being, may estimate her achievements at about a tenth of what every one must wish on the part of a parent; whereas to secure the *internal* means, is to go as far as nine parts in ten.

Leaving those who, without knowing its aspect, much less its applications, reject at first sight that which forms a most essential part of the preparation for a due discharge of the parental trust, I proceed to the suggestions which I have still in reserve for others. Well-conducted lectures on the construction and movements of the animal machine, will enable the hearer, as I have already intimated, to avail himself of other aids. It is in this view that lectures on the

different branches of *physics* are capable of being rendered so exceedingly useful. Books and engravings alone may answer one good purpose. I shall hereafter point out the grossness of medical impostures, which frequently pass with persons who have enjoyed the most liberal education. They are so gross that they can often be detected by a quantity of precise information, which to the whole of physiology does not, perhaps, bear a much greater proportion than the first four rules of arithmetic to the whole science of quantity. Now more than this proportion may be obtained by reading. I regret my inability to name any English work, calculated exactly for conveying it. Treatises designed to guide the judgment of the physician, or the knife of the surgeon, it is obvious, will not answer. But until the author of these essays, or some one else, shall succeed in measuring out information according to the wants of the common reader, select portions of such works as we have, appear to be the only recourse. Most modern writers, to a description of organs, join some account of their functions: and I am not acquainted with any decisive reasons for preference. But not to leave the uninformed wholly without directions, I shall name *the*

compendium of anatomy, for the use of students. 2 vols. 8vo. (Davies). Mr. John Bell's unfinished *anatomy of the human body* (Cadell) recommends itself, by a spirit, unusual in this class of publications, but effervescing occasionally with too great briskness. The learned reader may apply with most advantage to Dr. Soemmerring's classical volumes *de corporis humani fabricâ*, in which constant reference is made to the most accurate figures. A *compendium of anatomy*, in 3 vols. 4to. by the very accurate Mr. Andrew Fyfe, might have been mentioned as the best adapted collection, if attention to cheapness apparently had not caused the engravings, to be too little laboured. The *morbid anatomy* and the illustrative *series of engravings*, by Dr. Matthew Baillie, 4to. published by Johnson, will, both together, afford much instruction concerning changes of our organs, whose causes ought to be universally understood.—Though in many situations intelligent curiosity may not at present be able to obtain complete satisfaction, such helps as can be had ought not to be disdained. It is no barren course with but a single prize at the goal, which I am exhorting the public to traverse. At every distance will be found some recompence for exertion; and the re-

compences will continually increase in value, as further advances are made.

For all the labour that can be bestowed, sobriety of sentiment alone will be an abundant recompence. For opinion without information, is universally baneful: and where life is at stake, it must continually lead to fatal consequences. In questions of medicine, the most obstinate belief is usually coupled with the most profound ignorance. What we hear uttered with oracular confidence, in sick apartments and at convivial meetings, over wine and round the tea-table, when it is considered as idle speculation, can only provoke a smile. But if it be regarded as, one day, destined to decide the fate of infants and of invalids, it must excite pity and horror.

In tracing to their origin many generally received maxims, medical and diætetical, the unprofessional enquirer will meet with the most instructive lessons. He will find them derived from the most fantastic combinations. How else indeed could they have been framed? Let us imagine a savage alarmed at the sight of blood, gushing from his mouth and nostrils. Will he not grasp at the smallest chance of relief? and if a ruddy substance falls in his way, may not the idea of trying it flash across his mind? Does the

haemorrhage by chance subside — behold a remedy in credit! But we do not seize analogies of colour so readily as analogies of form. When once rude anatomical ideas are acquired, roots or leaves are concluded, from resemblance in shape, to be medicinal for certain organs. This is the celebrated doctrine of *signatures*. Nothing, we may be sure, could exceed in caprice the philosophy of the golden age. Two events, of which one causes considerable sensation, fall out together. A conjurer, priest or witch in repute, connects them as parent and child. The people have faith. When the parent appears, the offspring is expected, and ten thousand to one, expected in vain. No matter. The people have still faith. The child ought to have appeared, but was perhaps seized with an undutiful freak, or fell lame by the way. The good people persist in believing as they had believed at first, and all along find themselves comfortable in their reliance on superior illumination.

Should any hesitation remain as to the justness of this deduction, it may possibly be removed by the following incident, which happened within these few weeks, and which I hope the reader will believe, because it is in character, and also because I can assure

him that it comes to me from authority I cannot doubt.—A certain author of advertised medicines, whom rumour declares to have more solid reasons than any brother author whatever of the age, to congratulate himself on his publications, undertook a considerable journey. On the way, one of his companions turned the conversation to physic ; and asked the compounder of panaceas, what was the cause of the late bilious flux at Liverpool. *Sir*, answered he, *I can attribute it to nothing but the prodigious quantity of flies this summer. Never were so many flies ! All the meat was fly-blown !*

The doctrine of diseases gradually puts on a more scholastic form. The blood is supposed the life, because any considerable loss of this fluid is immediately fatal to animals, like man. The blood, therefore, becomes the subject of speculation ; and is imagined liable to changes, which liquids more open to observation undergo. As wine turns sharp, and as oil turns rancid, so in different circumstances may the blood. The idea of its *ropiness* gave rise to that practice of drenching the sick with ptisans, which to the present hour subsists in France. On the continent grains of rye, enlarged by disease *(secale cornutum)*, have the name of *mother-*

corn. The name, whencesoever derived, (and perhaps the tumefaction suggested the analogy of pregnancy), seems to have occasioned its employment to facilitate labour. It is wonderful with what avidity prejudices in physic as well as in religion are imbibed, and with what obstinacy they are retained, by the untutored mind. And in whatever case premises have not been accurately prepared with conclusions, in that case must the mind be considered as untutored. On the subject of these essays, it would, in most instances, be treacherous complaisance to make much difference between the peasant in the field, and the philosopher in the closet. At this day perhaps, both one and the other sometimes set about to regulate their constitution, according to fancies, conceived under the shades of Dodona, and amid the groves of the Druids, blended with the crude ideas of Grecian speculatists, and of their Arabian disciples. For these remote fountains have all contributed to swell the stream of modern popular error. Opinions cast off, like thread-bare apparel, by the faculty, go each in their turn to the public. *In the politest and best informed circles,* according to newspaper phraseology, no day probably passes without its victim to some antiquated hypothesis

concerning the *purity and impurity of the blood, the acrimony of the juices, the transmigration of humours, the salubrity of the air of this or that spot.*

Hence arises a distinction, most important to the unprofessional student of the laws of his own existence, between *positive* and *negative* doctrines. It is upon a knowledge of the latter, that all for whom I am writing, ought to lay the greatest stress. And so far as any one has informed himself respecting them, he may be said to have made progress in the art of self-preservation. The term *negative* will serve for a definition. Many suppositions reign for a time in the schools, become exploded, and afterwards make their fortune in the world. I need not say, that the proofs of falsehood or want of foundation in these suppositions, constitute the *negative* doctrines of medicine.—And it would be well if, every generation at least, a popular report of the reasons for their rejection were published by authority, could there in such a case be any authority, which mankind might safely trust. The use of the report would be to give fair warning against doing what is always the worst thing that can be done—acting upon notions, ascertained to be groundless.

So much is there to unlearn on the present

subject, that to reduce the mind to that *blank* state in which, according to Locke, it originally exists, would be no mean advantage to four out of five among those, who may take up these essays. The author is certainly accustomed to see invalids, for whom it would be happy if their whole mass of ideas—provided those were included that relate to the means of their recovery—could be abolished. No physician but must have found even disorders less difficult to manage than patients, and both disorders and patients together, less difficult than the friends of patients.

For so rapid are often what we call our reasonings, that we scarcely advert to the obscurest subject before we have *made up* our mind. Of a system it is still more true than of a fortune—come by it how we may, we must have one. In antient Greece a philosopher, who had never thought of ascertaining the constituent parts of any substance whatever, would single you out the element, of which the DEMIOURGOS fabricated the universe: and without troubling himself about the structure or properties of the stomach,* he

* Voluerunt Graeci statim esse philosophi naturae, antequam literas linguae naturae callebant. — Hoc modo de concoctione alimentorum disputarunt, antequam conformationem ventriculi noverint, quomodo hujus succus oritur.

Riegels Philosoph. Animal. I. 3,

would dispute with you all day long about digestion. Practice this convenient logic as much as you may on other occasions, it behoves you to take care how you suffer it to tamper with your person.

Those members of society upon whom the lot of others depends, being supposed in possession of the requisite information, how shall they most advantageously apply it? The question is of too much importance and extent to be slightly treated. And as the naked rule will be less instructive, I shall hereafter endeavour to teach by example the method of applying physiological knowledge to domestic use. At present I shall only observe, that writers, who are nothing wanting in zeal, when they inculcate the necessity of making all things else in the practice of education, subservient to health, have appeared to me to labour under the defect of too passive a plan. For what signifies it, how well you mould your mass, if every impinging body is capable of changing its form? Consider whether it be not your wish to turn a self-maintaining agent out of your hands. If so, manage your pupil as little, and let him manage himself as much as possible. The first care, it is true, must be of habit. But to habit I would not delay to

join reason as an associate. Habit may be safe enough while under the wing of authority; but as soon as left to himself, bad example often quickly proves more than his match. With the knowledge of good and evil by his side, Habit will walk through a world of temptation unseduced.

But there is an idea which, as lying heavy on many a heart, it might perhaps have been incumbent upon me earlier to do my best towards removing. Is not the counsel I give in effect to hang a naked sword, by a single hair, over the head during the repast of life? or to waste that time which should be devoted to the free enjoyment of the pure scenery of nature, in exploring a gloomy labyrinth, full of spring-guns, where though you may escape by incessant caution, the fear of an accident is almost as bad as the reality.

Having in early life been altogether a stranger to medicine as a trade, I naturally acquired the habit of regarding it purely as a body of doctrine, productive of certain advantages to society, and as respectable or the contrary, in proportion to the amount of those advantages. For the same reason perhaps, my own first impressions remain fresh enough to enable me to sympathize com-

pletely with those who feel themselves heart-struck, when they come first into view of the host of human maladies. I may therefore venture with the greater confidence to pronounce that these terrors will immediately decrease in violence and soon vanish, if we do but maintain a steady countenance. Those who have felt them most strongly, will recollect how rapidly they chace one another across the field of the mind, till it is left quite clear. And on the solemn occasion when a medical student first faces his professor, to what class are we to refer him, if not to that of the ignorant? Are not his apprehensions those that attach to this condition? Do they not vanish with his ignorance? Can any one member of society flatter himself that, when once past the years of thoughtlessness, he shall escape the frequent sight of the forms, and the frequent knowledge of the effects, of disease? And will not those terrific phantoms, which once for all croud before the student and disappear, be flitting in view of others continually through life?

Let us also for a moment consider the general effect of knowledge. Is it not manifest, from the whole history of mankind, that the ascertainment of causes has scarcely been more beneficial in preventing real danger

than in banishing false alarms? Is it to be believed that knowledge should produce this great benefit in all cases, except only in that of animal nature? The more closely we investigate, the less shall we be inclined to abide by a conclusion, so contrary to analogy. For where is the physician who has not perpetually occasion to observe, that the most harrassing and groundless apprehensions arise from want of acquaintance with the most obvious part of the structure and operations of the animated machine?—I now speak only of distress of mind. Another opportunity will occur for noticing the mischiefs, produced by blind efforts to obtain deliverance from imaginary maladies.

It is singular that the precepts of criticism should teach the same lesson with the history of knowledge. But so it is. There is not an author on the theory of fine writing, who does not tell you that to make impressions of dread you must avoid distinct images. But if you would shock your readers or spectators, till they are

——— distilled
Almost to jelly with their fears,

you should, on the contrary, only show a limb in the dusk and leave it to the fancy to make out the entire monster

for itself: that is, you must give glimpses of your fictitious beings, just such as people catch of the ailments, that flesh is heir to, as they go along the beaten track of instruction.

Some philosopher remarks, that a life would hardly suffice to enumerate the vain phantasies of mankind. No title in the list would, perhaps, be more copious than that of suppositions and exaggerated diseases. One day you meet with an insuperable dread of dropsy, either because the body is at certain hours distended from indigestion, or because in consequence of casual sickness, a small quantity of bile is thrown up. How so trifling an accident can produce such dreadful consternation, every one may not be ingenious enough to divine. But the reasoning is fresh in my memory, for it was addressed to me by a person of no ordinary or unimproved understanding, since I began to commit these thoughts to paper. It ran thus. "Here I "have been vomiting bile. The bile is con- "cerned in jaundice. After the jaundice I "may have the dropsy; then I shall die "the most odious and lingering of deaths." Again, the most insignificant inflammation shall occasion the shocking anticipation of a cancer. And this extreme of credulity shall

meet the extreme of incredulity, in sensible and carefully educated people. I do not say *well-educated*, as in these very distresses I find a proof of something wrong in the mode of thinking, which in matters of important concern, argues a capital defect in education; and as I am in general convinced, that for entertainment and use, the study I recommend is preferable to the four greater and three smaller sciences—provided one must be excluded in favour of the other. I believe too, that this study would be the best preservative against that weariness of living, which is among the most hopeless of our miseries, and the surest forerunner of suicide.—It is no uncommon thing to hear invalids confessing that they have for a time withheld their suspicions, respecting their own state, because they could not bear to contemplate it steadily. And very often the practitioner of physic is forced to prescribe for the alarms of patients, when there is no call upon him from their danger. To treat their false fears lightly, would be attended with the certain effect of forfeiting their confidence. And then there would be a degree of danger lest they should find the terrible and sublime, which many a quack bill so happily blends with the soothing,

more congenial to their feelings than unadorned truth.

But after all, is not the enquiry, whether people should or should not have their notions respecting diseases and remedies, fundamentally idle? Do we not find that they have and will have them? And then does it not remain, as the only question worth considering, *whether any pains should be taken to render these notions as accurate as possible in themselves and to give them for their boundary a full sense of ignorance?* To suppose any reader incapable of answering such a question for himself, would be too injurious.

That this sort of truth cannot be had, more than others, without the trouble of seeking it, may be proved by a profusion of examples. We have, in a considerable variety of cases, the good fortune to possess circumstantial memorials of persons, not merely well-informed, but distinguished at once for their diligence of research and the length to which they have carried their scepticism. And in these cases, the justness and general power of the understanding present a most humiliating contrast with its imbecility in that one thing, which concerns us above all others put together.—In what opinions an enquirer, whom Dr. Adam Smith (with the universal consent of

all his learned and judicious friends), places "at the very head of the whole literary tribe, "existing in Europe," could acquiesce, we may discover from his own letters. Dr. Tissot "assures me that in his opinion, the moisture "of England and Scotland is most pernici- "ous, the dry pure air of Switzerland most "favourable, to a gouty constitution." So says Mr. Gibbon, (*Gibbon's memoirs and Letters, No.* 177.) But what says Mr. Gibbon's experience? In less than two months after he begins to respire this salutary air, his "*old acquaintance*" returns; and, in spite of Dr. Tissot, is brought on by the dry N. E. wind, (No. 171). After an interval, for which he perhaps was indebted to a greater degree of abstinence than he had practised in London, where, he says, "the late and long "dinners *would* soon *have been* prejudical to "his health," this *long-lost* acquaintance makes amends for his delay by a visit, in which he occupies him solely for three months (No. 182). Even then he leaves behind him the terror of his return (183), occasions "wearisome days without amusement, and "miserable nights without sleep," "discon- "certs all his plans" (No. 193—4), returns for a longer season and with more severity than ever (No. 203), quits the sufferer in a con-

dition to fall a prey to an attack, seemingly not formidable, since " the medical gentle- " men expressed no fears for his life," and so not only brings a host of evils on his latter years, but prevents him from attaining nearly that age, which has been often reached by persons, originally not less feeble. " Let us now," says Mr. Gibbon, " drink and be " merry" (*Letter Dec.* 31, 1792). How far he was in earnest, a stranger finds himself at a loss to determine. Though he might not carry his observance of this precept so far as sottishness, I still suspect that but for the Madeira " improved by age," for the safe arrival of which he repeatedly expresses so much anxiety, he might never have had such a cluster of unfortunate reasons for renouncing his faith in dry air and Dr. Tissot.

The claim of Frederic II, to be accounted the most efficient character of his age, seems much less disputable than that of Mr. Gibbon, to rank at the very head of the literary tribe, existing in Europe. In sagacity the prince will be allowed at least to equal the historian. Frederic, who was so much happier in single sallies of thought than in a chain of reasoning, had, it is certain, the justest sense of the advantage of *true* self-knowledge, namely, of that which is acquired

by comparing the structure of the inanimate body with all that the living man does, says, thinks, and feels. Even on subjects of medicine he occasionally took more than royal pains to form his opinions correctly. That he did not begin enquiry at the right end, but either neglected the only sources of genuine information, or failed to draw from them enough for any useful purpose, must be lamented both on his own account, and that of others. Else he who so widely influenced his contemporaries, might have given their pursuits a direction more favourable to humanity. There is indeed hardly any limit to the benefits, that might be rendered to the community of mankind, even by a rich private individual, who should lift his conceptions to our highest interests, and devote his means to their promotion. Alas! for what an infinity of sufferings would relief or prevention be at hand, if a fourth part of the sums squandered upon horses, and dogs, and weeds, were wisely appropriated to the service of the human species.

Mr. Garve, by whom his great king has been, in so many respects, successfully appreciated, is particularly struck with what he reckons an anomaly in this extraordinary character. Frederic, it seems, required that

a disorder, of which he well knew the cause to be deeply rooted, and widely diffused through his system, should be immediately removed by a specific remedy.

"If a great personage of the common "stamp," observes Mr. Garve, "or even "if a person of reflection and of elevated "ideas, but utterly unacquainted with the "œconomy of the human body and with "medicine, had made such a requisition, it "might surprize, though it would not ap- "pear unacountable. But how Frederic— "he who among his other studies had not "been inattentive to the nature and origin "of diseases, and who has given out the "limits of art for much narrower than what "they really are—could seriously in his last "illness exact this from his physicians, is a "fact, in no way admitting of explanation. "Every invalid indeed makes such requisi- "tions in a certain degree, that is to say, he "has wishes of the kind. But he keeps "them to himself, well knowing their im- "possibility. And perhaps the king ex- "pressed them only to give a different turn "to his reproaches against physic and physi- "cians, on account of the little certainty of "the aid they afford."

"As little is it conceivable how a man,

" possessed of such self-command as to be
" capable of renouncing every comfort and
" every sensual enjoyment for the sake of
" public affairs, could be so much a slave to
" his relish for certain dishes, when he found
" the gratification of his appetite was fol-
" lowed by sufferings so severe. What! un-
" der the influence of motives, deriving their
" force from self-preservation, or from the de-
" sire of avoiding excruciating torture, could
" he *not* command himself? and yet *could*
" command himself, when the object was
" nothing more than to gain honour or set an
" example? Could considerations, seemingly
" so much feebler, counteract passion more
" effectually than the love of existence?
" The great man then, it should appear, re-
" strains, with more ease, a keen sensual ap-
" petite, when he has to attain certain ends—
" to execute an enterprize — to gain the
" opinion of the world — to fulfil official
" duties, than even when life itself is at
" stake!—So it is!—The finest fibres in our
" moral organization, are at the same time
" the strongest; and the coarsest, in some
" respects, the weakest!—It is so with great
" spirits in particular. In such, ideas prepon-
" derate over bodily sensations.—The inter-
" est of activity — that of useful designs

" prevails over the interest of self-preser-
" vation. — If none but this remains at
" a certain period; it concentrates itself
" within the interest of sensual gratification.
" *What*, thought the king, *is life, if there*
" *is nothing more to do, or to enjoy?*

" But equally extraordinary, during his last
" illness, is that association of vigour with
" imbecility—that freedom of mind which
" could occupy itself with other objects
" besides the disorder; and that capacity of
" prosecuting speculations in literature and
" politics, when bodily pain was so forci-
" bly soliciting the whole attention.—His
" concern for his guests during these last
" days, speaks as highly in favour of his
" heart, as the part he took in conversation
" in favour of his understanding.—And even
" the circumstance of his bringing on the most
" dreadful symptoms by eating, and then
" bearing them without complaint, exhibits
" a remarkable example of what philosophy
" indeed teaches, but what *such* cases only
" can impress—*that man is a strange tissue*
" *of contradictions.*"

Of moral difficulties, stated and relinqui-
shed by the greatest master of the philo-
sophy of life, that the most literary people
of Europe, and perhaps, Europe altogether,

has produced, I should not presume to attempt the solution, if a new approach did not sometimes give a clearer view of obscure questions.—Not to submit to regulation in the article of diet, is in character for a veteran despot. To suppress every inclination to complaint, is not less in the character of a man, who through a long life, has looked down upon human creatures, from an elevation too great to allow him ever to think of an appeal to their pity.—Here then, is really, nothing contradictory. We see effects produced by their proper causes. But these are irrelevant particulars. The principal phænomenon falls within the pale of principles, thrown out in the preceding pages; and it deserves to be put to heart by readers of every denomination.

In the soul of Frederic, let us reflect how large a space was occupied by the desires, which the estimator of his motives represents as constantly predominating over his propensities to epicureism. Did not the attainment of qualities, that go to the composition of the hero and the statesman, occupy him, almost entirely, during his best years? On other objects, what did he throw beyond a casual glance? For what purpose did he open the encyclopaedia of medical science, but to

give his satire a finer edge, to add variety to his allusions, or to extract a ray of light for some obscure passages of his philosophy. The ideas, therefore, of power and glory occurred most frequently, and were interwoven with his whole body of thought and feeling. The ideas belonging to the causes of health, were fainter even than the remembrance of the pleasures of the palate. And, in the great king of Prussia, the force and frequency of these several trains determined (as in all mortals they determine) the order and preference of actions. Our moral organization is pretty much what it is made to be. The strength of its fibres may be said to depend principally on the hand, by which they are drawn out. This simple statement, I flatter myself, removes Mr. Garve's difficulties. Frederic, in his moments of suffering, wished for that which, in his speculative moments, he had considered as impossible. So loosely were these speculative convictions fixed in his mind, that the first tide of suffering could sweep them all away.

This illustrious example is, at the same time, one of the most instructive, with which I am acquainted. It determines with sufficient precision, the necessary quantity of instruction. And from the nature of the case,

the quantity determines the mode.—In fact, if we would do full justice to the child, whose reliance is upon us, we should first teach him his duty, or interest, as a human animal: —interest and duty being, here at least, perfectly synonymous.—The interest or duty of that vocation, which makes him a human being of peculiar habits, ought to be but a secondary object with his preceptor. Of so much more consequence to happiness, are the circumstances in which we agree, than those in which we differ. Nor can any care, employed on the variable accessories, ever make amends for the neglect of the essential and common properties of the species. Unhappily, in general, the accessories absorb all anxiety, and the essential properties are disregarded.

It may sound extraordinary, if I say that valetudinarians and invalids, whose spirit is nothing refractory, every day experience sufferings, similar to those, which Frederic II brought upon himself by wilful indulgence. Enjoin a lively patient strict abstinence from such and such exertions. Obedience will be readily promised and sincerely intended. But, in a short time, some new impulse is given. The spirits flow at the old rate. The injunction is carried out of the thoughts.

The penalty is severely levied in suffering. The sufferer laments exceedingly—he really meant to forbear: but it happened so and so; and the caution was forgotten. What occasions this forgetfulness but the misfortune in early life, of not having had a particular class of ideas strongly impressed, and frequently repeated, so as to be completely blended with the rest?—It is not necessary in these cases, to have the excuse of vivacity. The dullest mortals are subject to the same default; and always for the same reason. If no trifling portion of human unhappiness be owing to the facility with which the healthy yield to every temptation, addressed either to the palate, or to any other organ of sensual gratification—if the opulent suffer from repletion almost as much as the poor from inanition,—we must still resort to the same want of particular and distinct impressions, as the cause, and to the communication of such impressions, for the prevention of these evils.

There exists scarce a person of weakly habit, or affected in a degree short of *bed-lying* illness, that does not receive injury from the inconsiderate usages of the world. Yet by these usages, which exact so much, and really obtain more than duty towards

ourselves and those dependant upon us, a commerce is kept up, the most absurd that can be imagined. One party loses, and the other does not gain. Sometimes both lose—one while the penance imposed by civility lasts; the other both then and afterwards. "I know it will half kill me," said a lady the other day, on setting out upon a formal visit, "but it is a matter of *decency*, and I "must go." It is the glory of the modern code of politeness, to have set people at their ease. The boast is somewhat premature. Many burdensome observances have unquestionably been abolished. But one would imagine, that every body must wish the abolition to go on, till it sets those at ease, who have the fairest title to indulgence. It is not that the nuisance passes unperceived; nor is it merely the want of spirit to *abate* it, as in the quondam case of servants' vails. But the bad consequences are not fully understood; hence they are continually reproduced. I would not be so rash as absolutely to affirm, that complaisance destroys more lives than contagion; but even if a balance could not be made clearly out in favour of complaisance, I am sure that its separate account, if well looked into, would bring about an abrogation of conventions, indifferent alike to morals and enjoyment.

Wealth exempts from certain kinds of labour. But the wealthy stretch this privilege a great deal too far for their good. The vain forms, to which they subject themselves, and the consequent injuries, might suffice to convince them, that they cannot, with impunity, flinch from the task of learning how to take care of themselves. Of such exemption, I think it highly probable, that the nature of things will never admit. I am sure that, as physic and physicians stand at present, the most opulent derive from their fortune very moderate security. We see them every day undergoing what a great poet of antiquity reckons among the last of human calamities—that of consigning their children and their children's children, to a premature grave. If we reckon from the middle station upwards, it would, I believe, be more just to assert, that the unhealthiness of families is in the direct, than that it is in the inverse proportion of their wealth. Money, I perceive, can put all the members of the faculty and all its appendages into busy motion. But to what purpose? very frequently not to the purpose of deferring, one hour, the fatal crisis. If indeed, all this bustle console the sick, or the survivors, then must it be considered as well purchased, at whatever price. Other-

wise, I often think the doctor's pomp and apothecary's mysterious hurry, fit only to figure, along with the efforts of the shopman and the vigilance of the nurse, in an *elegy in a city church-yard*, or *on the vault of all the Capulets*. So impracticable has it been found to reduce health to the state of a mere article of commerce, and so entirely does HYGEIA disdain to become the slave of PLUTUS.

It is obvious that what riches cannot do for their immediate possessor, they cannot do for those about him. Few families are happy enough, like Sancho Panza during his brief authority, to include in their establishment, a medical attendant. And if they did, there would still be calls enough upon the discretion of the presiding members. In health itself, there are moments when the destiny of an individual is decided by a single indiscretion. But in infancy, which may be considered as a valetudinary state, and in the course of a complaint of any hazard, it cannot but be that the conduct of the friends of the sick and those of children, should have the most powerful influence upon their fate.

The disposal of young people of an age to quit the paternal mansion, has always been an anxious and a difficult question. Not-

withstanding our numerous treatises on education, we still want principles of sure application. When public and private education come into competition, health seldom misses the compliment of being mentioned. But it rarely receives farther attention, though it ought in so many cases to determine against all other motives. Sentence is passed by judges, who have little knowledge of the case, and less suspicion of their own incompetency. Some acquaintance with the progress of slow disorders, and consequently of remote origin, must be gained, before it can be conceived how frequently a large school is the antichamber of death. Masters of schools are not, in general, understood, nor do they I suppose, pretend, to have any accurate knowledge of the living frame, though that be the qualification most essential in a superintendant of youth. When a child is ill, their humanity, I know, will not permit a moment's delay in *calling in advice.* But how often does the internal enemy sap the constitution before he draws the eye of the preceptor, or alarms the pupil himself!

In these scenes, danger in a multitude of forms lurks round the puny and the young. A blow from a stouter companion falls unseen, and would be forgotten by him who

receives it, if progressive blindness, or pains increasing with years, and rendering life uncomfortable, or terminating in a fatal disorder, did not keep the original *accident*, fresh in the memory. Probably, at a large school, a month as seldom passes without some such disaster, as a public rejoicing without a specimen of that destruction, which it is usually designed to celebrate.

I have heard the annual mortality in Bengal, from venomous animals and beasts of prey, estimated as high as some thousands. The numbers, ultimately destroyed by brute violence at schools, or spoiled for life, must, every year, be considerable. But it is not at schools only, where violence breaks out against the defenceless. In large families, it is by no means uncommon to meet with instances, where the faculty of feeling, or the vital organs, have received an irreparable shock, during some passionate or playful sally. The former seems to be more frequently the fate of girls, the latter of boys. An explanation of the manner in which the mischief happens, accompanied by expressions of just horror against the perpetrators, I apprehend to be necessary to an effectual system of prevention. Well-chosen facts, related minutely, but without exaggeration,

would, doubtless, leave an impression as strong as can be desired; and such facts would usefully supply the place of prohibited or permitted fictions.—Ah! if writers of books for children *could* copy nature faithfully, they might give their imagination a long holiday.—The feelings, thus generated, would spread from family to family, till they became national, obviating many atrocities, and prompting infinite acts of kindness.

Hence we appear to derive one of the most solid arguments against corporal correction, or against its public infliction, at least. Propensity to imitation, and fondness for exercising power, will easily enable children, more advanced in growth, to discover a sanction in the example of parents and masters. At school, who does not remember to have seen a domineering boy adopt the mien and language of his seniors, when they proceed to execution; and, in this assumed character, exercise his cruelty with double satisfaction on some unresisting comrade, upon whom he forces the part of culprit?

Chills are sometimes irretrievably injurious: and the puny are for ever subject to chills at school. I know what may be urged on the subject of inuring to hardiness. Prejudice

will still be in league with pedantry. But pedantry should be required to confer the Spartan constitution, before it introduce the Spartan discipline. Some boys and girls resist cold better than others; and these may with less injury, bear that tyranny in a stronger companion, which obliges them to warm his bed with their body: they may remain longer, without hurt, in water, or sustain long sittings in the cold of a school-room. But for whatever time a young person may resist such powers of mischief, if he is at last chilled, he is in danger. Either some violent attack will be the consequence, or the foundation will be laid for a fatal slow complaint. The less robust will become more and more enfeebled, till at last the powers of life fail; though not, perhaps, while they remain at school.

I have sometimes been struck with astonishment at the infatuation of the friends of children, who have nearly the same title to a mortal disorder, as to their patrimony. Let a child, whose ancestors, for one or two generations, have fallen victims to such a disorder, be himself delicate, still it is, not unfrequently, impossible to impress an effectual warning. Should the fatal symptoms not immediately threaten, (plainly be-

cause the season for their appearance is not yet arrived) the fate of the progenitors is disregarded. Unfavourable signs may even shew themselves to no purpose in the individual. For these omens bear an import, as the arrows in the quiver of Pindar resounded, only for the intelligent.* Merciless eagerness to secure the W—— —r or the E——n or some other *tic* hurries away the victim, tender in years, infirm in constitution, and perhaps, effeminate from ill-advised care. The aunt, the uncle, the guardian *hope* that the descendant will escape the fate of the family; fools! as if hoping against experience ever turned nature out of her course.

But I grow too warm. For it is really out of reason, to expect people accustomed, on all important occasions, to hire the use of foreign eyes, to see with their own, further forward than just to save the nose. Be it so. Let those, who have nothing of the commanding glance of a MOREAU or a LECOURBE, be excused from discerning the relative position of objects in a country, just

---

* ——— ωκεα βελη
Ενδον ενλι φαρεϊρας
Φωνανλα συνεϊοισι.

opening before them. But he must be an unobserving traveller indeed, who is at a loss with regard to districts, he has passed in a clear day, at his leisure. Yet it is certain that they, who are loudest in the behalf of public schools, are just such travellers. It is a point, you may easily satisfy yourself about. When they tell of the scenery of their childhood, that it was purely composed of limpid streams, verdant plains, and breezy mountains, you must hear them out without contradiction, to the end. Then question them quietly, and you will find that they have forgotten bottomless quicksands and pestilent bogs, though they had met with them, in every square mile of their terrestrial paradise.——Or should you prefer allusions to art, a little cross-examination will still supply you. If a certain author, for instance, be right in comparing a hypochondriacal body to the cask, in which Regulus was rolled to death ; you will find, that it has been in one of these same blessed manufactories, that their ailing encomiasts have had the longest and sharpest spikes driven through their sides.

To some young children, sudden violence is not more prejudicial than example is to others. Genius, in virtue of its sensibility,

eagerly pursues the first pleasures of excess; and in virtue of the same sensibility, receives more injury than mediocrity, which, however, is carried along by the general movement, while it is the common sport to conspire to initiate dullness into the mysteries of debauchery.

For children, the frequent society of children alone, is nearly the worst possible society. It should be avoided equally for the sake of manners, morals, intellect and health. In their memorials, I find no circumstance so much in common to eminent persons, as familiar access, during childhood, to judicious and conversible adults. The moderns enjoy the advantage of the press; but they unaccountably relinquish the free intermixture of persons of different ages—an advantage, for every rational purpose of education, hardly inferior to what we derive from the press, and indispensably necessary to give this its full effect. There is, however, a feeling, kindling through society, similar to that which preceded the reformation of religion; and the coming generations will not be the victims of those popish errors, which have so long found an asylum in the recesses of our seminaries. Of late, it has happened that many persons, anxious that their children

should attain robustness of constitution as they rise to maturity, and that they should, at the same time, be well-instructed, have consulted the author;—so many indeed, as to convince him, that an institution would, at this moment, find support, where glaring absurdities and ruinous abuses should be avoided, where the instructors should be companions to their pupils, and science, usefully active habits, good principles and personal prudence should obtain their due regard. Experience has taught him, that a much greater proficiency in antient literature, than usually takes place at schools, is compatible with all these objects. Nor can he ever advert to this subject without afresh deploring a friend, who clearly traced back the origin of his illness, to one of our greatest schools. From the fate of a parent, indeed, there was too much reason to fear for him. And on this very account, he should never have been trusted within those dangerous precincts: or at least, not till he had been confirmed in years and habits.

Though conspicuous among the parliamentary opposers of Mr. Pitt, (whom he considered, as of all politicians the most bloated with conceit, and as director of the

longest course of clumsy experiments upon property and life, ever endured by an enlightened nation from one man), ministerial calumny wisely refrained from assaults upon his character. And highly as he was respected on the faith of rumour, he was still more esteemed wherever he was familiarly known. The more, concern for an increasing family caused him to revert to the consideration of his own experience, the less did he approve the system of education, followed in his own case, even when he viewed it without reference to the deep injury he felt that it had inflicted upon himself. Having unexpectedly emerged, for a time, into health, he actually began a course of self-instruction, and resolved, by the help of his ample fortune, to promote the useful arts. But an ill-advised residence in one of the few southerly countries of Europe, then open to the English, apparently brought back the danger it was meant to avert. In consequence, at an age little exceeding thirty years, the community lost a member, who united, in an uncommon degree, the best inclination and greatest means.

Through his illness, this excellent and amiable person followed the advice he deemed best for himself, as religiously as he had, at

all times, regulated his conduct with regard to others, by the strictest principles of integrity. And whoever knows much of the retired sentiments of young people, particularly of the young women of the present day, must have been struck with their anxiety to act up to injunctions, which require the renunciation of the longest established habits and the constant practice of self-denial. And who but must be deeply affected, when such a disposition is of no use towards saving them from an untimely fate, though if well directed in time, it might have blessed them with a length of happy days?

That *no one knows the value of health, till it is lost,* is among those paradoxes, which are oftenest repeated in a tone of lamentation. But where is the wonder? If we come into the world without ideas, how should we expect to feel the value of any thing, till it is taught by express instruction, by observation, or by accidental experience? And is it not a prerogative of the human species, and the glory of civilized ages, that they can avail themselves of the first to supply the want, or escape the injuries, of the last? There is nothing, surely, in the nature of health, which should render a sense of its value either an innate principle, or particularly difficult to instil by proper means.

To be understood, it must, no doubt, be taught. Whoever will examine or observe, may satisfy himself, that we owe to instruction early begun and sedulously continued, those judgements concerning merit and demerit in actions, which prove, where they apply, such alert and faithful guides. To form a moral *sense*, for so the ready habit of certain artificial sentiments has been metaphorically styled, is not more practicable in itself, than to form a *sense* for health, or for happiness, which latter must be, in great measure, composed of the sense for health. It is, in fact, only necessary to proceed in the same manner as with regard to the moral sense. A broader foundation, indeed, if I am not mistaken, stands ready laid in our nature, to receive the sense for health. The labour would, therefore, be more easy and solid.

The individual, in fact, need only be taught to *sympathise* with himself, if that term may be applied to the feelings, excited by different possible states brought strongly into contrast. Consciousness of health, thus contemplated, will become just as much a source of pleasure as the consciousness of virtue. Of course, even while it subsists in its fullest vigour, its value will be fully felt. As to extraneous approbation and disappro-

bation, they can as steadily be attached to actions, affecting the person himself, as to those affecting others. Indeed, to say that they *can* be attached, is to speak too feebly. They *cannot but* attach themselves. The tendency of conduct, when clearly perceived, must involve censure or applause. That these have hitherto operated so much more as social than as selfish motives may, in part, be ascribed to the inevitable order of moral discovery. For it has been in this, nearly as in physical, where the desire of knowledge began at the remotest extremity of visible nature; and proceeding from the planetary masses to the inanimate bodies of our earth, fixes at present, with ardent and diffusive zeal, upon plants and inferior animals, but passes by the majestic species of man, as unworthy to be studied, but for the ignoble end of gain.

New suggestions justly excite scruples.—May not disagreeable and ridiculous effects be apprehended from putting mankind so minutely on their guard against noxious powers? What can we expect, but that plain old common sense should be turned out of doors, to make room for prudery in regimen; and that every generous energy should be crippled by coward caution?—But if no

evil have followed from the pains, that have been so wisely taken towards putting us on our guard against deadly nightshade and against lead, why should any be produced by a complete reasoned catalogue of *poisons*, in the most comprehensive sense of that term? Lead does but occasion palsy; and whatever destroys activity and enjoyment, produces palsy too, of the worst species. For the advantage of sprightly vigour over pining sickliness, is greater than that of the enervated over the palsied, or of the palsied over the dead. Can we seriously fear, that if we suffer ourselves to be persuaded out of the use of poisons, both quick and slow, the feast of nature should not be various enough for a healthy appetite? Did any one, once master of their effects, ever pine for the berries of belladonna or the sweets of lead?

I see, indeed, that folks who *live by rule*, do not offer the most tempting example. Nor have I any intention of proposing it to the world. Just the contrary. There is nothing in my opinion, so much to be deprecated. Better, I sincerely think, not to live at all. But I deny that this is likely to be the lot of any one brought up with the knowledge of things hurtful, and in the practice of that knowledge. The difference between what I re-

commend, and you dread, is equal to the difference between a faquir and a stripling, enjoying in the presence of assembled Greece, the consciousness of powers, about to distinguish him as conqueror at the olympic games. For what are these *methodists* in meat and drink, whom we are all so justly averse to the idea of resembling? Are they such as prudential care set out in life with the science of good and evil? or have they, in ignorance, abused their animal powers till their sensibility acquired the unnatural property of deriving pain from the slightest impression, and could be no longer agreeably affected by any? Examine well, and see if they be not drooping, blighted creatures, frequently half-insane from a mixture of regret and remorse, with whom "the past is a scar, and "the present a sore," sensible only in the gross, from what quarter have issued the darts, by which they have been stricken, and so wild with fear that they hear the wing of the angel of death in the rustling of the gentlest gale of heaven.

These forms of misery have been laid to social refinement, as its genuine but monstrous offspring. Rousseau has proposed to annihilate the one, in order that the other might not deform the face of creation. It has, however,

been rendered probable, that the unhappy singularity of Rousseau's temper and circumstances, drove him to this desperate expedient. The difficulty he found to satisfy common wants, the slavish occupations to which he submitted rather than owe obligations to bounty, and the bitter self-reproach, consequent upon some things he did in compliance with his intractable spirit of independence, all contributed to irritate him ; till at last he perceived in the state of nature, the sole preventive for the diseases of society. So intolerable did he find these *relative* sufferings, (which, as a savage, he undoubtedly would have escaped), that the farther he receded from the institutions of polished society, the nearer did he seem to himself to approach happiness.

Knowledge of evil is the first step towards its remedy. We should, therefore have obligations enough to Rousseau, if the transcendant blaze of the beacons which he has set up in different parts of his Emilius, had not saved thousands from perdition, and if his insanity were no excuse for his extravagancies. But sagacity, greatly inferior to that of Rousseau, will discover that right does not consist in wild deviation from wrong. Nor does it require much acquaintance with what

is related of the different modes, in which our species exists, to see that we should gain little, in respect to physical or ideal pleasure and pain, by the change proposed, even if we could disencumber ourselves of our habits.

To accelerate the progress of civilization, is probably our only practicable and only effectual plan. The sentiments of uncultivated tribes, as echoed by travellers, have, for the most part, a mournful accent. And of any such tribe, it would be difficult to prove, that they live in so much hope, and in so little fear, as to be worthy of the honour of our envy. If man is essentially a reflecting animal, the advice to push reflection as far as possible, might have been more wise than to renounce it altogether. It may, at least, be worth while to consider, whether the exertion of intellect cannot repair mischiefs, which it must be allowed to have incidentally produced, and whether that havoc of health and life, with which our civilization is justly upbraided, may not be the effect of the barbarism, which it still retains in its composition.

The effort to expel this alloy, as it is of private resort, may be a silent operation. In exerting it, there is no more occasion to wait

for the consent, and no more necessity to incur the censure, of others, than in providing our apartments with more commodious furniture. Of our success, domestic felicity will be the sure reward. No firmer bond of family union can be imagined, than for one part of the members, in addition to existence, to have received from the enlightened love of another the faculty of enjoying existence.

Whatever one parent may suffer before a child is brought into the world, with all that both may do for some time afterwards, ought never of itself to be depended upon, for securing such a return as every parental heart must wish. These obligations can be known only, like the history of Gengis Khan, from extraneous testimony. The party obliged has no means of entering into them, but by reducing his dimensions according to a scale, not furnished by consciousness, and which it is seldom a peculiarly interesting operation to apply* to onesself. For kindness

---

* In this case, the imagination would be best assisted by portraits, or rather by family groups. I know not if it have entered into the head of artists, or their employers, to aim at promoting mutual endearment, by shewing a child his forgotten self, in some *interesting* situation with a parent.

to produce the desired effect, it must, at some time, be felt by the receiver as kindness. A surfeist of kindness causes a parent to be considered as a sort of importunate slave; and children are regularly ungrateful (*ungrateful?*) to those, by whom they are spoiled. The opposite sentiment as regularly arises, where parental care lays a train of gratifications along the path of life. With each gratification the idea of him who bestows it, occurs, and it has often the highest possible advantage,—that of being introduced by agreeable surprize. Such obligations, in regard to the warmth with which they are felt, must be the very reverse of those conferred on unconscious infancy. They must strengthen the bond of filial gratitude, at the very period when it otherwise will grow weak, or be dissevered. "I FEEL MYSELF INDEBTED FOR THE HEALTH I ENJOY, TO "THE FORESIGHT OF A PARENT," is at once the most affecting eulogium, and the most permanent of motives for gratitude.

How encouraging this prospect! how full of despair, the opposite! What would be the feelings of that father, to whom, as he was contemplating his infant on its mother's breast, it should be announced by a voice, which he could not but believe prophetic:

That being, whose happy smiles thou art now watching, shall, one day, have cause to exclaim; "Ah! had not the affection of my parents "been as blind as it was strong, never should "I have been the wretch I am."

END

OF

FIRST ESSAY.